Network Working Group
Request for comments #237
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THE NIC'S VIEW OF STANDARD HOST NAMES

The NIC strongly favors standardization of host names. People will get used to the names appearing on documents coming from or through the NIC and so we would like the ones used by NIC and the ones used in Telnets to agree. In the absence of agreed standard names, we have chosen some. We are not particularly partial to the ones we are using, but do feel any standard naming scheme take into account most of the following considerations.

(1) Names consist of two parts, SITE and HOST, preferably separated by a delimiter such as a dash.

(2) Site and Host names have some mnemonic value, if possible not involving the name of the computer as computers will change, but the organization running it will remain.

(3) We strongly recommend at least 8 characters be allowed, including the delimiter. The NIC now uses 12 characters maximum.

(4) Assuming 8 character names, we recommend that the site name be a maximum of 4 characters and that Host names at a given site be unique in the first six characters. Thus, with the delimiter, sites desiring to only have 6 characters in their tables can accept all characters typed by the user and truncate to 6 characters and still achieve uniqueness.

(5) Once the NWG has set a standard syntax and names for present hosts, the NIC should be responsible for maintaining the standard and assigning names to new hosts and other groups involved in Network dialogue. Besides hosts there are NIC stations and individuals in organizations not on the Net involved in the Network dialogue. The NIC needs to assign names to these Network affiliations and will use the rules set by the NWG.